

# Kansans Can Redesign: Mentoring Program



*Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.*



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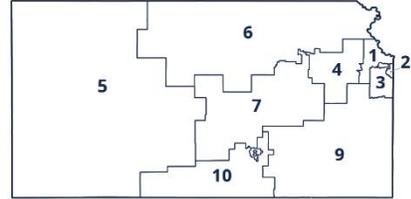


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# Redesign Mentoring Program

## Table of Contents

- Project Overview- Definitions & Mentoring Rationale..... 1**
  - Desired Outcomes .....2
  - Program Goals.....2
  
- Requirements..... 3**
  - Time Commitment .....3
  - Program Commitment .....3
  - Mentor Qualifications .....3
  
- Certification Options.....4**
  - College Credit.....4
  - Professional Development Points.....4
  
- Recruiting and Requesting Mentors ..... 5**
  - Recruiting Mentors.....5
  - Requesting a Mentor .....5
  
- Mentoring Best Practices..... 6**
  - Anticipated Impact .....6
  - Mentoring Feedback Loop .....7
  
- Acknowledgements ..... 8**
  
- Resources ..... 9**

# Redesign Mentoring Program

## Project Overview

### Definitions:

**Mentors** are teacher and/or building leaders in Ascent Year schools who provide Redesign assistance, guidance, encouragement, and support to peers through structured and trusting relationships. Mentor/mentee relationships should be reciprocal and develop the competence, character, and leadership dispositions of both parties.

The **mentee** for this program would be the School Redesign Team from a Launch Year or Plan Year school. Each mentee (School Redesign Team) will be matched with a single mentor (Ascent Year teacher leader or building leader).

### Mentoring Rationale:

As more schools enter the Redesign Plan Year and subsequent Launch Year, the KSDE Redesign Team has observed the need for visible and tangible examples of the Redesign **Plan Year** and **Launch Year** criteria in action. Additionally, the KSDE Redesign Team has observed through numerous Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings the value and importance of peer networking and support. Research shows that when staff actively collaborate, learn and share knowledge with peers in other schools, this new learning positively impacts teacher efficacy and school learning culture (Kools, 2020). It is for these reasons that the KSDE Redesign Team has worked, with the support of the Redesign Advisory Council (see Acknowledgements), to craft a Redesign Mentoring Program whereby **Ascent Year** Redesign School Leaders (Principals, Pilots, and CoPilots) can become mentors for School Redesign Teams (mentees) working through their initial Plan Year or Launch Year. While the KSDE Redesign Team facilitates monthly PLCs for schools in their Ascent Years, which work to build peer relationships, schools in their Plan and Launch are part of smaller, and sometimes isolated, groups. Networking across cohorts/years and regions in the state, and the shared experiences this opportunity will provide, will benefit both mentors and mentees as mentors provide the networking and support pieces that are underdeveloped in the current Redesign support system.

## Desired Outcomes:

### Mentoring Competencies

In this program, the Redesign Mentor will be evaluated on their growth in three Mentoring Competencies. Growth will be measured by the mentor through their own reflection on each competency and the success criteria. The goal of this program is to develop the mentoring competencies of Ascent Year teacher leaders and building leaders who are serving as mentors. The Redesign Mentoring Competencies and success indicators are:

Competency	<i>A successful mentor can...</i>	Evidence of Successful Mentoring
Communication	→ Establish two-way communication that drives conversation and learning forward through active listening and strategic questioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful questioning skills</li> <li>• Active and intentional listening</li> <li>• Ability to show empathy</li> <li>• Cultural competence</li> <li>• Ability to give constructive feedback</li> </ul>
Facilitation	→ Facilitate constructive conversations and present essential information in a meaningful and engaging way while managing the diverse needs and perspectives of mentees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of adult learners</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Patience</li> <li>• Facilitate and manage strategic thinking and planning</li> <li>• Coach to facilitate problem solving</li> </ul>
Professional Commitment	→ Establish trust through timely and targeted support that is grounded in lived experience and process expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional dispositions</li> <li>• Professionalism</li> <li>• Respectful</li> <li>• Follow through</li> </ul>

### Mentee Competencies

Mentees in this program are School Redesign Teams in their Plan or Launch Year. Through this mentoring program, mentees will be supported in successfully completing their respective Redesign Year. Each Redesign Year is supported by a timeline and the Redesign Success Rubric. Mentees will be expected to make

adequate progress along the rubric while also making gains within the Redesign Success Competencies. For this program, mentee success will be anecdotally reported through the mentor based on the timeline, but then measured by each mentee through the Redesign Success Rubric (which exists outside of the mentoring program).

## Program Goals:

The Redesign Mentoring Program will...

- Support schools in successfully implementing their School Redesign Plan around the 4 Redesign Principles.
- Build supportive, trusting relationships between Redesign Mentors and new School Redesign Teams.
- Develop the leadership and mentoring skills of Redesign school and system leaders across the state of Kansas.

## Measurable Objectives

- All Mentees will maintain a successful Launch Year as prescribed by our Launch Year Timeline and measured through our Redesign Success Rubric.
  - Data Collected- Mentoring **Form** to be completed by the mentor after each (bi)monthly meeting with the mentee
- All Redesign Mentors will meet regularly (approximately 2x/month for 30 minutes) with their mentee team and form an impactful and meaningful relationship.
  - Data Collected- Mentee will complete a mid-point and end of relationship **form** asking for feedback on the quality of the support and its impact of their Launch Year
- All Mentors will gain professional advancement through their participation in the program (through PD points **or** college credit).
  - Data Collected- **Reflection on Training**
  - Data Collected- List of mentors obtaining college credit or submitting documentation for PD points

## Requirements:

### Time Commitment (Timeline)

#### Mentoring-

- Commitment lasts for 1 school year (approximately August-May).
- Mentoring consists of 2, 30-minute conversations each month.
- All meetings should be structured with an agenda and should align to the Launch Year Timeline and the project goals.

#### Training-

- Mentors will commit to a 2 hour virtual training in advance of beginning the mentoring relationship.

### Program Commitment

- Mentors will commit to completing a google form at the end of each mentoring session regarding the mentee's progress and possible needs as they work toward a successful Plan Year or Launch Year.
- Mentors will keep a [journal](#) of their personal growth within the mentoring competencies.
- Mentors will commit to attending a 1.5 hour virtual meeting quarterly to further discuss the Mentoring competencies.

### Mentor Qualifications

- Mentors will be experienced with, and passionate about, Kansans Can Redesign.
- Mentors understand what it means to engage in a system of continuous improvement to meet the needs of each student.
- Mentors will be current members of their own School Redesign Teams.
- Mentors will be either the Pilot, Co-Pilot, a Team Member, or the School Administrator.
- Mentors can also be district personnel who have facilitated and supported Kansans Can School Redesign in their district.
- Mentors will currently be working in Redesign Schools that are in the 'Ascent Years'.
- Mentors will be committed to the training and mentoring time requirements and program commitments.

## Certification Opportunities:

### College Credit- [Direction Sheet](#)

- Mentors will have the opportunity to obtain 1 Credit each semester through Fort Hays State University.
- Credit will be awarded as 'Credit for Prior Learning'.
- Mentors will be awarded 1 credit hour as an equivalent of 15 clocks hours spent engaging in the Redesign Mentoring Program. Mentors have the potential to earn one credit for each semester that they serve as a mentor (or 2 credits hours per school year).
- Mentors seeking the graduate credit for their work as a mentor will need to:
- Enroll in Fort Hays State University
- Keep records of time spent on the mentoring program
- Keep records of the work completed as a mentor
- This will be done primarily through training sessions, group reflections, and personal reflections.
- Submit work to Fort Hays State University upon completion of the semester for review.
- One time \$40 enrollment fee and \$25 fee for work review for 1 credit hour (\$50 for 2 credit hours)

## Professional Development Points

- "One semester hour of college credit shall count as 20 Professional Development Points".
- Upon completing the Credit for Prior Learning process, and upon receiving the credit, mentors can submit their transcript to their district for PD Points.
- Mentoring activities can be logged as 'Service to the Profession' which amounts to one point per clock hour.
- If a mentor does not wish to obtain college credit, the mentor can submit an application to their district for PD credit. Mentors will need to work with their district to determine the necessary steps for obtaining Professional Development Points.

# Recruiting & Requesting Mentors:

## Recruiting Mentors

The KSDE Redesign Team will utilize existing outreach methods (PLCs, Newsletters, etc) to promote the opportunity and to solicit interest. Mentors will be self-identified, but each mentor will need to submit a signed [Assurance Letter](#) from their supervisor guaranteeing their qualifications and ability to participate in the Redesign Mentoring Program.

As part of this program, Mentors will be able to earn a \$500 stipend upon completion of the mentoring relationship (i.e. the end of the school year).

Mentors will work with a mentee school outside of their school system. Mentor/Mentee assignments will be established by the KSDE Redesign Team and will be based on school size, location, age group, and implementation needs.

## Requesting a Mentor

In this program, mentors will volunteer their time to engage in supportive relationships with their mentee school. While mentors have the ability to obtain college credit through Fort Hays State University or Professional Development Points by submitting evidence of engagement to their district, they are not formally compensated for their work as a mentor. Thus, mentee schools are encouraged to provide their mentor with some form of an honorarium as a show of appreciation for their time and commitment.

Schools that are beginning their 'Launch Year' can request to have mentoring support. If a school wishes to request a mentor, they will contact the KSDE Redesign Team with that request and with essential contact information for their whole School Redesign Team. The KSDE Redesign Team will take those requests, solicit interest from the pool of mentors, and seek to create a match by taking into account mentor's experience and capacity.

Mentees will be given a Mentor outside of their school system. If the Mentor/Mentee relationship is not suitable for either party, the KSDE Redesign Team must be notified, and if possible, a new Mentor will be provided, or alternative supports will be made available to the Mentee.

## Mentoring Best Practice:

This program builds off best practices found in new teacher mentoring programs. When examining the 10 “most frequently mentioned practices to support new teachers” ([Kagan Gaines, 2020](#)), the Redesign Mentoring Program builds on the following:

- Prioritize the mentee’s student outcomes as main purpose of support
- Ensure equitable outcomes for ALL students
- Build trust and apply emotional intelligence/support

While the Mentor in this program will be someone outside of the Mentee’s school and district, the three practices outlined above will be woven into the Mentoring relationship. Evidence of their inclusion can be found in the Mentoring Competencies section. Additionally, the Redesign Mentor Competencies reflect mentor qualities as described in the article “The Role of Teacher Mentoring in Educational Reform” ([Koki](#)). These qualities include but are not limited to: knowledge of change management, interpersonal skills, ability to coach, effective communication, and understanding of adult learners.

In addition to building on best practices for mentoring, the Redesign Mentoring Program also mirrors training requirements for Mentors as outlined in the “Kansas Model Mentor and Induction Program Guidelines for New Teachers” ([KSDE, 2017](#)). Mentors and mentees may have opportunities to observe one another, give and receive feedback, and engage in self-reflection. Mentors will “enhance communication skills and build relationships”, and through our training we will “clarify mentors’ roles and responsibilities” (KSDE, 2017). The Redesign Mentoring Program approaches mentoring from a school to school perspective and complements the support currently offered to Redesign schools in their plan and launch year. By mirroring best practices, the Redesign Mentoring Program seeks to increase the effectiveness of implementation and evaluation of Redesign strategies.

## Anticipated Impact

Teacher mentoring programs have been shown to improve practice and increase retention ([Holloway, 2001](#)). The Redesign Mentoring Program seeks to increase success for Plan and Launch Year schools-as measured by the Plan Year and Launch Year timelines-by providing ongoing support and constructive feedback. If schools experience Plan and Launch Year success, then student achievement and progress toward the Kansas State Board of Education Outcomes will increase, as evidenced through local and state results. Schools select strategies based on a robust needs assessment and analysis; thus, effective implementation of strategies tied to determined needs will increase student achievement and outcomes. If schools are supported through mentoring programs during their Plan Year and Launch Year, then successful implementation can be ensured through mentoring, mentor evaluations, constructive feedback, and additional intervention when needed.

Impact and effectiveness of the Redesign Mentoring Program will be measured through:

- Mentor reflections around their growth in each Mentoring Competency
- Mentor evaluations of Mentee success (based on the appropriate timeline)
- Mentees' State Board Outcome data as gathered and evaluated by the Kansas Department of Education
- Mentee evaluations of the mentoring relationship

## Mentor Feedback Loop

Mentors will communicate directly with the KSDE Redesign Team. Mentors will have formal and informal opportunities to express their concerns, request support, or provide general feedback regarding the mentor/mentee relationship.

Formal opportunities include:

- Mentor feedback form to be completed after every mentoring conversation
- Mentor bi-monthly training and support sessions with KSDE

Informal opportunities include:

- Connecting with KSDE Redesign team members via email or phone at their discretion

Mentors will be able to express immediate or general concerns to the KSDE Redesign Team throughout the duration of the program. If the mentor, or mentee, expresses concern that the mentor/mentee relationship is not suitable or sustainable, then the KSDE Redesign Team will intervene and reassign each party.

## Acknowledgements:

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- Idalia Shuman, Kansas National Education Association
- Tara Lebar, Kansas Board of Regents
- Melissa Valenza, Kansas Department of Education
- Bert Moore, Kansas Department of Education
- Paula Smith, Kansas Department of Education

## Resources:

Gaines, Michelle Kagan. *A Review of best practices in new teacher mentoring*. OSPI Beginning Educator Support Team. February 2020. Accessed at: <https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/best/AReviewofBestPracticesinNewTeacherMentoring.pdf>

Holloway, John H. *Research link: The Benefits of mentoring*. Educational Leadership. Volume 58. Number 8. Pages 85-86. May 2001. Accessed at: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may01/vol58/num08/The-Benefits-of-Mentoring.aspx>

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